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# Building Semantic Metadata for Historical Archives through an Ontology-driven User Interface

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## ABSTRACT

Historical archives represent an immense wealth, the potential of which is endangered by the lack of effective management and access tools. We believe that this issue can be faced by providing archive catalogs with a **semantic layer**, containing rich semantic metadata, representing the content of documents in a full-fledged formal machine-readable format. In this paper we present the contribution offered in this direction by the **PRiSMHA project**, in which the conceptual vocabulary of the semantic layer is represented by computational ontologies. However, acquiring semantic knowledge represents a well-known bottleneck for knowledge-based systems: in order to solve this problem, PRiSMHA relies on a **crowdsourcing collaborative model**, i.e., an online community of users who collaborate in building semantic representations of the content of archival documents. In this perspective, this paper aims at answering the following **research question**: *Starting from the axioms characterizing concepts in the computational ontology underlying the system, how can we derive a user interface enabling users to formally represent the content of archival documents by exploiting the conceptual vocabulary provided by the ontology?*

Our solution includes the following steps: **(a)** A manually defined configuration, acting as a pre-filter, to hide “unsuited” classes, properties, and relations; **(b)** An algorithm, combining heuristics and reasoning, which extracts from the ontology all and only the “compatible” properties and relations, given an entity (event) type. **(c)** A set of strategies to rank, group, and present the entity (event) properties and relations, based on the results of a study with users. This integrated solution enabled us to design an **ontology-driven user interface** enabling users to characterize entities, and in particular (historical) events, on the basis of the vocabulary provided by the ontology.

## CCS CONCEPTS

• Digital libraries and archives • Semantic networks • Ontology engineering

## KEYWORDS

Ontology-driven User Interfaces, Computational ontologies, Historical Archives, Crowdsourcing platform







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representation of events with participants, time and location, but, again, no role and no specific event typology are available. Projects like Agora (van den Akker et al., 2010) and DIVE (de Boer et al., 2015) are based on SEM (Simple Event Model) (van Hage et al., 2011) a domain-independent lightweight ontology including concepts such as *event*, *participant* (called *actor*), *time*, *space*, and *role* with no further specification of participation modalities or event types. The same remarks hold for the ontology used in the CultureSampo project (Hyvönen et al., 2012). CIDOC-CRM (Doerr, 2003; Le Beuf et al., 2015) offers about thirty rather general event types, along with dozens of properties suitable for describing events. However, as the above-mentioned ones, also the CIDOC-CRM ontology is loosely axiomatized and quite general. Finally, the Event Model F (Scherp et al., 2009) is a top-level ontology extending DnS (Gangemi and Mika, 2003), and thus it inherits the DnS semantically rich characterization of events, participation, and roles played by participants, although it is not tailored to the historical domain.

In some application contexts, such ontologies might not be enough, because either a stronger formalization is needed or a more specific characterization of the domain concepts is required. However, also in those contexts, these ontologies can still play an important role, precisely by virtue of their generality and, at least for some of them, of their popularity. They can actually be targets of ontology alignments aimed at mapping more specific or more formalized concepts to their ones: In this way, they represent a general common layer, which enhances data interoperability. As an example of this approach, it is worth mentioning the Data for History initiative ([dataforhistory.org](http://dataforhistory.org)), which offers a web-based platform supporting an open ontology development process and the alignment of the developed ontologies to CIDOC-CRM.

From the system architecture point of view, an interesting perspective to be taken into account is proposed by Dragoni and colleagues (Dragoni et al., 2016). The authors describe a general architecture (and a tool implementing it, called MOKI-CH) for knowledge management platforms in the Cultural Heritage domain. The authors identify several requirements for such an architecture, namely: (a) collaboration support in building semantic models of the domain, (b) data exposure and data linking, (c) multilingual management, (d) user engagement. With respect to requirement (a), this paper faces the issues raising from the use of computational ontologies of the domain as a semantic model driving the collaborative platform. Differently from the corresponding requirement in (Dragoni et al., 2016), however, the collaboration in PRiSMHA aims at building a knowledge base of semantic metadata, and not the ontological model itself. As far as data exposure and data linking is concerned (requirement (b)), we are working at exposing a SPARQL endpoint, making PRiSMHA knowledge base available for third party applications (see Section 4). Multilinguality (requirement (c)) is an important issue to be handled, especially in a European perspective, and it is part of our future work, while user engagement (requirement (d)) definitely deserves a deeper study: motivating users to participate in crowdsourcing projects is of paramount importance in order to build solid and effective communities, and it requires the close collaboration with local institutions, that in the case of PRiSMHA, are represented by the cultural organizations involved in the Polo del '900.

Public engagement through ICT in the field of Cultural Heritage has been largely promoted and discussed in the last decades (Visser and Richardson 2013; King, et al., 2016). In particular, crowdsourcing approaches have been adopted in order to perform different kinds of tasks -- ranging from handwritten documents transcription to old picture recognition, segmentation, and classification (Terras, 2016) -- and several cultural institutions have started crowdsourcing projects (Ashenfelder, 2015). A good survey, analyzing success factors of crowdsourcing projects, can be found in (Noordegraaf et al., 2014). Moreover, two projects, among many others, are worth mentioning: Scribe ([www.nypl.org/blog/2015/11/23/scribe-framework-community-transcription](http://www.nypl.org/blog/2015/11/23/scribe-framework-community-transcription)) is an open-source platform enabling communities of users to transcribe documents like handwritten texts, that cannot be successfully processed by OCR tools; Micropasts ([crowdsourced.micropasts.org](http://crowdsourced.micropasts.org)) (Bonacchi et al 2014; Bonacchi et al 2019) supports the collaborative production of meta-data for historical documents (the location of scenes appearing in pictures, the transcription of letters, etc.). One of the most interesting exploitation of crowdsourcing in the Cultural Heritage domain is represented by user-generated meta-data, usually consisting in social tagging, which typically leads to *folksonomies* (Hooland et al., 2011; Ridge, 2013; Gupta et al., 2010). Social tagging involves important issues such as the quality of the produced meta-data, the personal and social acceptance of participatory platforms, and the already mentioned motivations of participants (Koukopoulos and

Koukopoulos, 2019), but the discussion of these aspects falls outside the scope of this paper. Another close perspective that is worth mentioning is that of groups of experts collaborating in the annotations of heritage collections, as, for example, in the CULTURA project (Agosti et al., 2013) or in the SAGE environment proposed by Foley and colleagues (Foley et al., 2017), where user-generated annotations are supported by automatic techniques. Moreover, the goal of Foley and colleagues is to build semantically rich metadata, in the sense discussed in (Marchetti et al., 2007). Both the integration of automatic Information Extraction tools to support annotators and the goal of producing rich (full-fledged) semantic metadata are goals of the PRiSMHA project, too.

### 3 The Ontology: HERO

HERO (Historical Event Representation Ontology) is a modular ontology that covers the different aspects of historical events, both at general and at domain-specific levels. As already mentioned in Section 2, we can consider the backbone of a typical historical event description as the specification of the following basic elements: The event type (e.g., a murder), the place where it occurred (e.g., a specific building in Rome), the time when it took place (e.g., in September 1972), and the participants in the event (e.g., those three people, that revolver, etc.).<sup>1</sup> The organization of the HERO ontology mirrors such general structure of an event description.

An upper-level module, called HERO-TOP (<https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP>), provides the most general notions that are inherited by all the other modules. In particular, following the ontological principles underpinning the DOLCE ontology (Borgo and Masolo, 2009), this module accounts for the basic distinctions between *perdurants*, *objects*, and *abstract entities*.

*Perdurants happen in time* and evolve by accumulating temporal parts; examples of perdurants are a person birth, an assassination, a war, etc. *Objects* are those entities that *are in time* and that are “wholly present at any time they are present” (Masolo et al., 2003, p. 15); there can be *physical objects* (e.g., mountains, houses, persons, etc.) and *non-physical objects*. Among non-physical objects, *social objects* (i.e., objects depending on a community of agents) play a major role in the historical domain (examples of social objects are laws, social roles, organizations, etc.). The basic relationship between objects and perdurants is *participation*, i.e. objects participate in perdurants. For instance, king Umberto I, Gaetano Bresci, and the revolver used by the latter to shoot the former are three objects participating in the assassination of Umberto I by Gaetano Bresci (a perdurant). Abstract entities are neither objects nor perdurants. The most important class of abstract entities in HERO is that of *time intervals*, intended as in classical physics (such as July 29 in the year 1900, April 1945, the year 1968, etc.).

The HERO-EVENT module (<https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-EVENT>) accounts for the basic notions related to event representation. In particular, it distinguishes between two kinds of perdurants, i.e. *events* (in strict sense), which represent changes in some state of affairs (e.g., the assassination of king Umberto I) and *states* (which represent the persistence of some state of affairs, such as the Italian unemployment rate being 11.1% on September 2017). Among events, we can distinguish *actions* (i.e., intentional events, such as the assassination of Umberto I) from *phenomena* (i.e., non-intentional events, such as Kobe earthquake in 1995). HERO-EVENT also characterizes some common event types, such as: *coming into existence/ceasing to exist* (e.g., the Italian Communist Party came into existence on January 21st, 1921 in Livorno, and ceased to exist in February 1991 in Rimini), *person birth/person death*, *entity creation* (e.g., on January 21st 1921 in Livorno Antonio Gramsci and other people founded the Italian Communist Party) and *entity destruction* (e.g., on February 1991 in Rimini the delegates to the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress approved the dissolution of the Italian Communist Party), *role assumption/ceasing playing a role* (e.g., Barack Obama became president of the United States in 2009 and ceased playing that role in 2017), etc.

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<sup>1</sup> It is worth noting that we should not consider such elements as mandatory in any event description. In some cases, some of them may be unknown or irrelevant. By contrast, in some cases other kinds of elements should be specified, possibly in addition to those listed above (e.g., the prospective participants -- i.e., people having the right to vote -- in a voting event).



HERO-EVENT puts at disposal several properties for describing events and states. Some of them allow us to specify *where* an event or a state occurred, as well as the *initial*, *final* and *intermediate locations* for those events or states that change their place during their evolution (e.g., a protest march). Other properties allow us to specify *when* an event or a state took place, i.e. its (possibly approximate) *beginning*, *ending times*, and *timespans*. Another set of properties of paramount importance are those representing the so-called *thematic* (or *semantic*) *roles*. Such properties express the participation modalities in events or states, i.e. the roles that participants can play in them (Goy et al., 2018) (e.g., agent, patient, instrument, opponent, etc.). For instance, king Umberto I participated in his assassination as a *patient* (since he was affected by the event), while Gaetano Bresci participated as an *agent* (since he intentionally carried out the event) and the revolver participated as an *instrument*. Some properties represent relations between events/states: Among them, we find a relation for expressing the fact that an event/state somehow *influenced* another event/state (of which *causality* is a specific case) and that an event (state) is a *sub-event* (*sub-state*) of another event (state).

The HERO-PLACE module (<https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-PLACE>) characterizes the basic notions relevant to places (intended in a broad sense as geographic features, i.e., intuitively, as anything that we can represent on a map). In particular, HERO-PLACE distinguishes between *natural places* (e.g., mountains, seas, etc.) and *artificial places* (e.g., buildings, dams, etc.); between *terrestrial places* (e.g., terrestrial mountains, rivers, etc.) and *astronomical places* (e.g., planets different from the Earth, stars, etc.). Moreover, it offers a set of properties for representing mutual relations between places (e.g., inclusion, overlapping, etc.).

The HERO-TIME module (<https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME>) accounts for the basic notions relevant to time (in its classical understanding and, in particular, related to the description of human affairs). It enables us to represent time intervals and durations, and to reason on them, also by means of Allen's relations (Allen, 1983). For those time intervals that can be specified by referring to clock/calendar conventions (e.g., days, months, years, etc.), the corresponding expressions (e.g., dates, months and year expressions, etc.) can be represented as well. Given their relevance in the historical domain (as in many others), HERO-TIME provides also the basics for representing temporary relationships (e.g., temporary parthood, location, affiliation in organizations, etc.).

The HERO-ROCS module (<https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-ROCS>) characterizes some notions of great importance in the historical domain. It accounts for (social) roles (such as professions, public offices, etc.), organizations (such as companies, public bodies, etc.) and collective entities (e.g., laborers, consumers, groups of citizens, etc.), i.e., "collections of individual objects (their members) that have their own individuality, full existence, and the capability to take part in (historical) events; they can be ascribed characteristics, properties or behavior that cannot be (conveniently) reduced to those of their members" (Goy and Magro, 2019).

HERO-EVENT-900, HERO-PLACE-900, HERO-ROCS-900 are three domain modules that refine HERO-EVENT, HERO-PLACE and HERO-ROCS, respectively. They introduce several notions relevant to the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These modules are an extensible seed for an ontology for the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and they currently cover the notions needed to describe the events narrated in the archival documents selected for the PRiSMHA project, i.e., the students and workers protest during the years 1968-1969 in Italy. In particular, HERO-EVENT-900 provides the characterization of many specific types of events and states, in several areas, including: *confrontational actions* (e.g., street clashes, police charges, etc.), *protest actions* (e.g., strikes, protest marches, etc.), *life events* (e.g., marriages, dismissals, etc.), *labour-related events* (e.g., labour bargaining, labour agreement achievement, etc.), *phenomena* (e.g., earthquakes, floods, etc.).

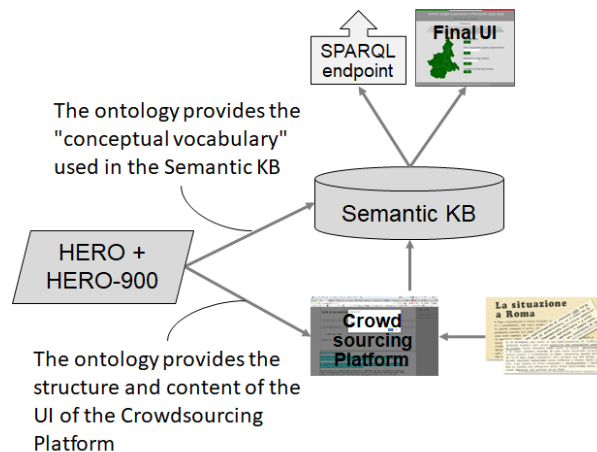
HERO-PLACE-900 mainly characterizes notions related (although not exclusively) to modern populated places, such as *city*, *building*, *transportation infrastructure*, etc.

HERO-ROCS-900 offers a set of specific role types (e.g., nationalities, professions, public offices, etc.), a set of specific organization types, in several areas (e.g., in company, healthcare, political, etc. areas) and a set of specific collective entity types (e.g., social classes, nationality and political-based collective entities, etc.). In particular, this module includes a full-fledged characterization of roles (e.g., various types of workers, various types of students) and organization types (e.g., various types of Trade Unions, various types of organizations in the political sphere, and so on) relevant for the domain selected for the PRiSMHA project.

An application version of the HERO ontology (comprising both high-level and domain-specific modules) has been implemented in OWL 2 DL ([www.w3.org/OWL](http://www.w3.org/OWL)). This ontology drives the crowdsourcing system, representing its domain knowledge (see Section 4). The OWL 2 version of the ontology -- particularly its domain-specific modules -- is continually increased; currently, it contains: 424 classes, representing all the entity types that the system knows; 352 properties, which can be used to characterize entities; 79 individuals and nearly 4,500 logical axioms.

## 4 The Crowdsourcing System: Ontology-driven User Interface

Figure 1 shows the main modules of the PRiSMHA overall system, highlighting the role of the ontology. Digitized documents are “annotated” through the *Crowd-sourcing Platform*, which enables users to build formal semantic descriptions of their content. The user interaction supported by the system is driven by the ontology (*HERO+HERO-900* in the figure), described in Section 3. The ontology also represents the “conceptual vocabulary” of the *Semantic KB*, which contains assertions about domain entities. The Semantic KB is implemented as a RDF triplestore ([www.w3.org/RDF](http://www.w3.org/RDF)), where assertions are expressed by RDF triples. In particular, each assertion is of the form  $\langle s, p, o \rangle$ , where the subject  $s$  is an entity present in the Semantic KB,  $p$  is a property (defined in HERO, or belonging to RDF itself – e.g., *rdf:type*) and the object  $o$  can be either an entity present in the Semantic KB, a literal (i.e., a number, a string, a date, etc.), or a HERO class (e.g., *PhysicalPerson*). The meaning of such a triple is that the ‘entity  $s$  has the value  $o$  for the property  $p$ ’. For example, the assassination of king Umberto I would be represented as an instance *ev1* of the HERO *Assassination* class, along with a set of assertions including the following ones (whose meaning is straightforward):  $\langle ev1, hasAgent, GaetanoBresci \rangle$ ,  $\langle ev1, hasPatient, UmbertoI \rangle$ ,  $\langle ev1, hasInstrument, revolver1 \rangle$  (where *hasAgent*, *hasPatient*, and *hasInstrument* are HERO properties, and *GaetanoBresci*, *UmbertoI*, and *revolver1* are individuals).<sup>2</sup> Data in the Semantic KB can be made available through a *SPARQL endpoint*, as well as through a navigation User Interface (*Final UI*). Moreover, the Semantic KB (RDF triplestore) can be linked to relevant datasets in the LOD cloud; see, for example, the Zeri and LODE project by Daquino and colleagues (Daquino et al., 2016). These aspects represent a work in progress and are not the focus of the present paper.



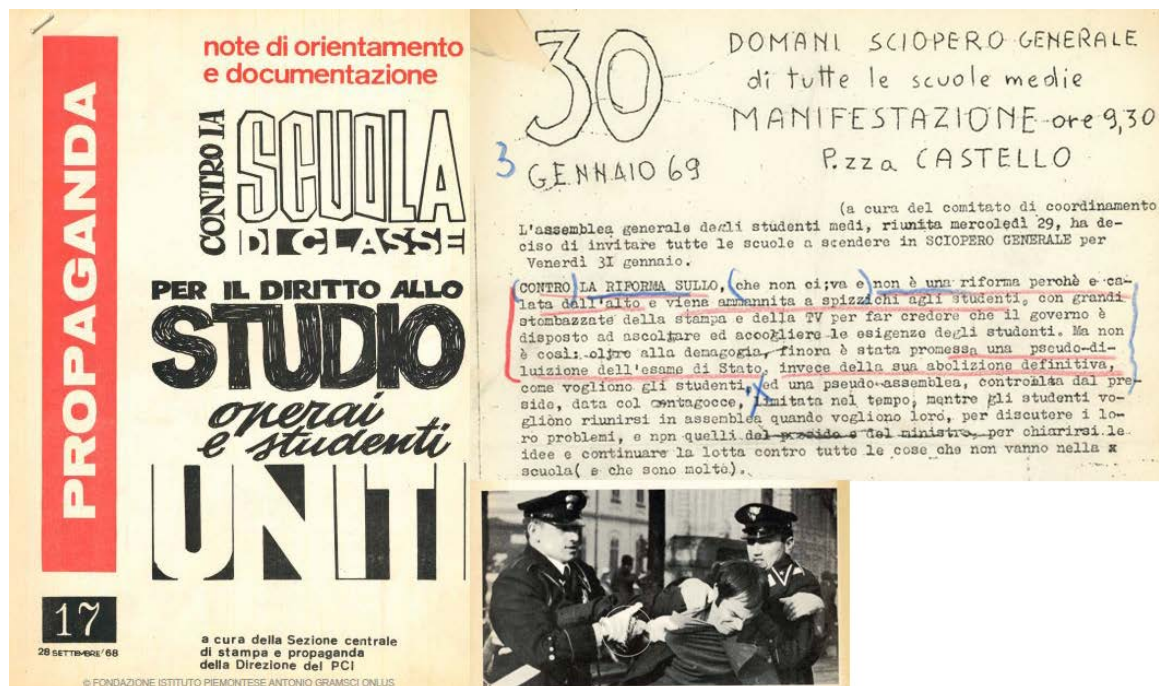
**Figure 1: The main modules of the PRiSMHA platform, with the role of the ontology in focus.**

The system software architecture is compliant with the classical three-tier model, where the user interface is driven by the application logic which, in turn, manages the interaction with the data layer. In particular, in

<sup>2</sup> Entities, properties, and classes are represented in the triplestore by URI (for example, the entity representing the city of Turin is represented by the following URI: <https://w3id.org/prismha/resource/geo/b5e3f1b3-6d4a-4c43-887b-62626516931f>). Here we do not use URIs, but simple names, for the sake of readability.

the current prototype of the Crowd-sourcing Platform, the user interface is implemented by exploiting Bootstrap 3.3.7 (getbootstrap.com), Ajax and JQuery 3.3.1 (jquery.com), the application logic is implemented using Spring Boot 1.5.10 (spring.io/projects/spring-boot), and the data are stored into a MySQL 5.6.38 (www.mysql.com) relational database. The interaction with the ontology is performed exploiting OWLAPI 5.1.0 (owlcs.github.io/owlapi) and all the semantic data are stored into an RDF triplestore through Jena TDB 3.6.0 (jena.apache.org/documentation/tdb). The SPARQL endpoint is a work in progress: we are studying the use of Apache Jena Fuseki (jena.apache.org/documentation/fuseki2). The current implementation of the Crowd-sourcing Platform can host different *projects*: each project is associated to a set of documents and to a pool of users (among which there is the *project coordinator*). In the following, we will focus on a single project.

*Documents* associated to a project can be any kind of archival items; the current prototype manages textual documents, (non-)searchable pdf, and images (jpeg and png). Figure 2 shows some examples.



**Figure 2:** Examples of archival documents managed by the PRiSMHA platform [source: (Goy et al., 2019a); copyright: Fondazione Istituto Piemontese Antonio Gramsci].

Within each document, specific *fragments* can be identified: in textual documents, specific sections of text can be identified as fragments (in blue in Figure 4); for (non-)searchable pdf there are two options: setting a single fragment corresponding to the whole document, or setting a fragment for each document page; images are currently considered as composed by a single fragment. The goal of the PRiSMHA platform is to provide a full-fledged formal semantic description of the events described in archival documents. The produced formal semantic representations can be seen as a rich stand-off *annotation* of the documents: in particular, each annotation is linked to at least one fragment identified in the document.

In the current version of the platform, there are three types of users, with different privileges: *administrators*, *super-annotators*, and *annotators*. *Administrators* have full privileges, granting them all possible operations, on projects as well as on documents and annotations; *super-annotators* can annotate documents with new semantic representations and can modify existing annotations (also if they have been inserted by other users); simple *annotators* can add new annotations and can propose different representations for the existing ones, but cannot directly modify them. Within each project, each document can be assigned a *supervisor* (typically, a *super-annotator*) and a pool of users, who are enabled to work on that document.

After logging-in, the user can select the project s/he wants to work on. The *project page* (Figure 3) displays the project title, a button to add new documents (*Add new resource*), and the list of documents included in the project: the documents the user is allowed to work on can be clicked on for selection. Some small icons indicate the status of the annotations on each document: an open folder indicates that the document can be annotated (the status can be changed to *closed* by the supervisor: if this is the case, no annotation can be added to the document); a pencil indicates that there are annotations (i.e., semantic representations linked to the document), while a cross indicates that no annotation is present for the current document.

**Figure 3: A project page on the PRiSMHA prototype platform.**

Figure 4 shows the page corresponding to a textual document (in this case, a biography of Sergio Garavini, a famous Italian Trade Union leader). Users in the pool assigned to the document can identify *fragments* (in blue in the figure), i.e., textual units that will be annotated. By clicking on a specific fragment, users can: (a) See the existing annotations (i.e., semantic representations already linked to that fragment), which are shown on the right-hand bar in the screenshot; by selecting an annotation, users can see the details (event typology, participants, etc.). (b) Add a new annotation, i.e., link the fragment to an entity (typically, an event) and provide a semantic description for it. First, the system suggests to search the system Semantic KB for an already existing entity; if the required entity does not exist, the user can create a new one by clicking on *Add and link new entity* (or on *Add new entity*, if she prefers to link it later on).





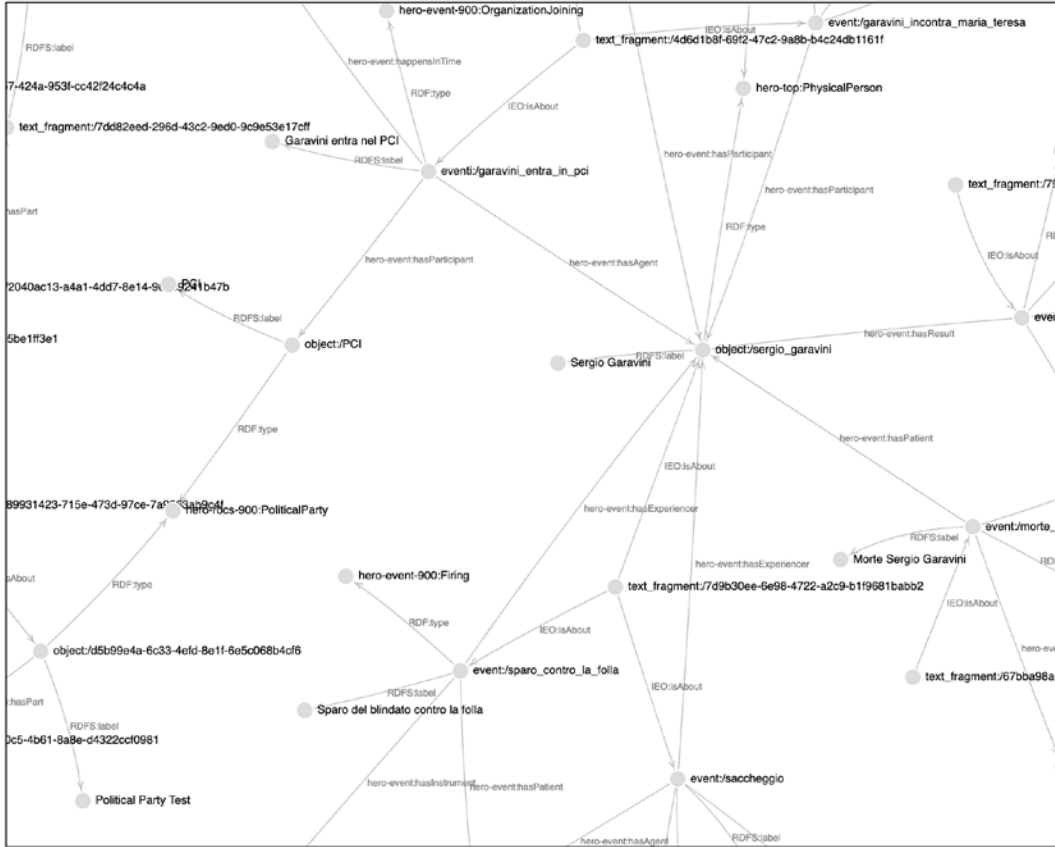


Figure 6: A graphical representation of the knowledge base on the PRISMHA prototype platform.

PRISMHA Home Projects Semantic Descriptions Configuration Contact Welcome Davide

## Configure PRISMHA Typologies

Select all classes you want to show/hide

- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HEROEntity>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HEROObject>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HEROGeographicFeature>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HEROPhysicalObject>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HEROLivingBeing>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HEROPhysicalPerson>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HERONonPhysicalObject>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HEROModalObject>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HEROTOPDescription>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME/HEROCalendarClockIntervalExpression>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME/HEROCalendarSeasonExpression>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME/HERODate>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME/HERODoMMYDate>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME/HEROCalendarCenturyExpression>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME/HEROCalendarYearExpression>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME/HEROCalendarYearMonthExpression>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME/HERODateTime>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME/HEROGregorianCalendarClockIntervalExpression>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HEROMeasurementExpression>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-ROCS/HEROROCSCardinalityExpression>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HEROQuantitativeMeasurementExpression>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME/HEROTimeIntervalDurationExpression>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HEROQualitativeMeasurementExpression>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TOP/HERORelatedRelationship>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-TIME/HEROTemporaryRelationship>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-ROCS/HEROROCSTemporaryInvolvementInOrganization>
- <https://w3id.org/hero/HERO-ROCS/HEROROCSTemporaryAffiliationInOrganization>

Figure 7: The tool enabling administrators to hide classes, properties, and relations.

In the following section, we will describe the algorithm that we designed and used to extract from the ontology all and only the properties which can be used to characterize an event of a given type. Moreover, we will present the results of a user study aimed at providing us with suitable strategies to rank, group, and present the event properties in the user interface.

## 5 The Problem: Selecting Properties from the Ontology to Characterize Events

### 5.1 The Algorithm Extracting from the Ontology the Properties Available for Characterizing Events

As stated above (see Section 4), the HERO ontology plays a central role in guiding the user interaction. Users may add new entity descriptions (e.g., descriptions of events, persons, organizations, etc.) to the system Semantic KB or they may modify descriptions already present in it. Each entity must be described in terms of the ontology, which means that, for each entity, its type -- i.e., the HERO class it belongs to -- and a set of features -- i.e., assertions involving HERO properties -- should be specified. Within the Semantic KB, assertions are expressed by RDF triples. In general, any property offered by the ontology is suitable for describing entities of some (but not necessarily all) classes. For instance, all properties representing thematic roles (*hasAgent*, *hasPatient*, etc.) are suitable for describing only events and states (in the specific sense that only events and states can be subjects of triples mentioning thematic roles), but not other kinds of entities: It would make no sense to state, say, that an organization has some entity playing a thematic role in it (in other words, an instance of the HERO *Organization* class can never be the subject of a triple mentioning a thematic role). Even restricting our attention to events and thematic roles, we find some incompatibilities. For instance, in a historical domain, it would make no sense specifying an agent who intentionally carried out an earthquake event (i.e., an instance of the HERO *Earthquake* class can never be subject in a triple mentioning the HERO *hasAgent* property, even though an earthquake is a specific kind of event and the *hasAgent* property specifies a thematic role).

It is worth noting that we assume that the ontology correctly specifies the mentioned incompatibilities, in the sense that it logically implies them. However, we cannot assume that the ontology explicitly represents each one of them by a single axiom of a specific kind. Thus, discovering these incompatibilities is an unavoidable need, typically requiring a (possible complex) reasoning on the ontology.

Moreover, besides the compatibility between HERO classes and HERO properties, we should also consider the issue of the relevance of properties w.r.t. classes. In fact, given a class in the ontology, the properties compatible with the class could be not equally relevant for describing the instances of the class. For example, we can expect the HERO *hasPatient* property (expressing the entities affected by an event) being usually more relevant than the HERO *hasForce* property (expressing the non-volitional causer of the event) for describing an earthquake in the historical domain. This latter issue is the subject of the user study discussed in Section 5.2, while in this section we discuss the former one, i.e. the problem of singling out the compatible properties for each class in the ontology.

In this context, we say that an ontological property  $p$  is compatible with an ontological class  $C$ , if and only if there exists at least one assertion of the form  $\langle c_l, p, o \rangle$  (where  $c_l$  is an instance of  $C$ ), which is consistent with the ontology. In the present work, we make the common assumption that the ontology is expressed as a Description Logic theory (Baader et al., 2010).<sup>4</sup> In such a framework, we can formalize our notion of compatibility by reducing it to that of concept satisfiability in Description Logics (Baader et al., 2010), as follows:

**Definition 1:** Given an ontology  $O$ , a named class  $C$  and a property  $p$ , we say that  $p$  is compatible with  $C$  in  $O$  (i.e. the pair  $(C, p)$  is valid in  $O$ ) iff the concept  $C \sqcap (\exists p. \top)$  is satisfiable with respect to  $O$ .

---

<sup>4</sup> Since the application version of the HERO ontology is expressed as an OWL 2 DL theory, the results discussed in this section also apply to it.



Given the notion of concept satisfiability in Description Logics, the definition above states that the pair  $(C, p)$  is valid in the ontology  $O$  if and only if there exists a model of  $O$  (i.e., an interpretation satisfying all the axioms in  $O$ ) in which the concept  $C \sqcap (\exists p. \top)$  is nonempty. Since the mentioned concept represents the set of instances of the  $C$  class that have some value for the property  $p$ , it should be clear that the definition above properly formalizes our notion of compatibility between classes and properties in an ontology.

Singling out the valid pairs  $(C, p)$  in an ontology is a complex task, involving formal reasoning on the ontology, that we cannot delegate to users. Instead, the system should provide the users with the valid pairs. It is well known that the standard reasoning problems (including concept satisfiability) are largely intractable (N2ExpTime) in SROIQ (Kazakov, 2008), the Description Logic underlying OWL 2. Moreover, in an ontology with  $m$  named classes and  $n$  named properties, the number  $m*n$  of the possible class-property combinations could be very large (in the current version of the HERO ontology, there are nearly 150,000 of such combinations). Therefore, it could be unfeasible to detect the valid pairs by explicitly testing the satisfiability of the concepts  $C \sqcap (\exists p. \top)$ , for each named class  $C$  and each property  $p$ , even using a best-performing SROIQ reasoner (Parsia et al., 2017).

In the following, we present an algorithm that computes the set of valid pairs  $(C, p)$  and exploits the axioms present in the ontology to reduce the number of reasoner invocations for testing the satisfiability of the corresponding concepts  $C \sqcap (\exists p. \top)$ , for each named class  $C$  and each property  $p$  in the ontology.

The algorithm is based on the following properties:

**Property 1:** Given two named classes  $C_1$  and  $C_2$ , and a property  $p$  in an ontology  $O$ , if  $C_1$  and  $C_2$  are disjoint and the domain of  $p$  is either  $C_1$  or a subclass of  $C_1$ , then  $(C_2, p)$  is not a valid pair in  $O$ .

**Proof:** Let us suppose that  $(C_2, p)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ . Then, by Definition 1, the concept  $C_2 \sqcap (\exists p. \top)$  is satisfiable with respect to  $O$ ; this means that there exists a model of  $O$  in which an instance  $x$  of  $C_2$  has some value for the property  $p$ ; given that, by hypothesis, the domain of  $p$  is either  $C_1$  or a subclass of  $C_1$ , it follows that  $x$  is an instance of  $C_1$  in that same model of  $O$ , but this contradicts the hypothesis that  $C_1$  and  $C_2$  are disjoint.

**Property 2:** Given a named class  $C$ , and a satisfiable property  $p$  in an ontology  $O$ , if  $C$  is either the domain of  $p$  or a superclass of it, then  $(C, p)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ .

**Proof:** By hypothesis,  $p$  is a satisfiable property, which means that there exists a model of  $O$  in which an entity  $x$  has some value for the property  $p$ ; but, by hypothesis,  $C$  is either the domain of  $p$  or a superclass of it, therefore  $x$  is an instance of  $C$  in that same model of  $O$ ; this means that in that model  $x$  is an instance of the concept  $C \sqcap (\exists p. \top)$ , which means that such concept is satisfiable w.r.t.  $O$ ; therefore, by Definition 1,  $(C, p)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ .

**Property 3:** Given two named classes  $C_1$  and  $C_2$ , and a property  $p$  in an ontology  $O$ , if  $(C_1, p)$  is a valid pair in  $O$  and  $C_2$  is a superclass of  $C_1$ , then  $(C_2, p)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ .

**Proof:** By hypothesis,  $(C_1, p)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ , thus, by Definition 1, the concept  $C_1 \sqcap (\exists p. \top)$  is satisfiable with respect to  $O$ , which means that there exists a model of  $O$  in which an entity  $x$  is an instance of the mentioned concept, i.e.  $x$  is an instance of  $C_1$  and it has some value for the property  $p$ ; given that, by hypothesis,  $C_2$  is a superclass of  $C_1$ , we have that  $x$  is an instance of  $C_2$  in that same model of  $O$ ; therefore, the concept  $C_2 \sqcap (\exists p. \top)$  is satisfiable with respect to  $O$ , thus, by Definition 1,  $(C_2, p)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ .

**Property 4:** Given a named class  $C$  and two properties  $p_1$  and  $p_2$  in an ontology  $O$ , if  $(C, p_1)$  is a valid pair in  $O$  and  $p_2$  is a superproperty of  $p_1$ , then  $(C, p_2)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ .

**Proof:** By hypothesis,  $(C, p_1)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ , thus, by Definition 1, the concept  $C \sqcap (\exists p_1. \top)$  is satisfiable with respect to  $O$ , which means that there exists a model of  $O$  in which an entity  $x$  is an instance of the mentioned concept, i.e.  $x$  is an instance of  $C$  and it has some value for the property  $p_1$ ; given that, by hypothesis,  $p_2$  is a superproperty of  $p_1$ , we have that  $x$  has some value for the property  $p_2$  in that same

model of  $O$ ; therefore, the concept  $C \sqcap (\exists p_2. \top)$  is satisfiable with respect to  $O$ , thus, by Definition 1,  $(C, p_2)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ .

**Property 5:** Given two named classes  $C_1$  and  $C_2$ , and a property  $p$  in an ontology  $O$ , if  $(C_1, p)$  is not a valid pair in  $O$  and  $C_2$  is a subclass of  $C_1$ , then  $(C_2, p)$  is not a valid pair in  $O$ .

**Proof:** Let us suppose that  $(C_2, p)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ . Then, by Definition 1, the concept  $C_2 \sqcap (\exists p. \top)$  is satisfiable with respect to  $O$ ; this means that there exists a model of  $O$  in which an instance  $x$  of  $C_2$  has some value for the property  $p$ ; given that, by hypothesis,  $C_2$  is a subclass of  $C_1$ , it follows that  $x$  is an instance of  $C_1$  in that same model of  $O$ ; therefore, the concept  $C_1 \sqcap (\exists p. \top)$  is satisfiable w.r.t.  $O$ ; thus, by Definition 1,  $(C_1, p)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ , but this contradicts the hypothesis.

**Property 6:** Given a named class  $C$  and two properties  $p_1$  and  $p_2$  in an ontology  $O$ , if  $(C, p_1)$  is not a valid pair in  $O$  and  $p_2$  is a subproperty of  $p_1$ , then  $(C, p_2)$  is not a valid pair in  $O$ .

**Proof:** Let us suppose that  $(C, p_2)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ . Then, by Definition 1, the concept  $C \sqcap (\exists p_2. \top)$  is satisfiable with respect to  $O$ ; this means that there exists a model of  $O$  in which an instance  $x$  of  $C$  has some value for the property  $p_2$ ; given that, by hypothesis,  $p_2$  is a subproperty of  $p_1$ , it follows that  $x$  has some value for the property  $p_1$  in that same model of  $O$ ; therefore, the concept  $C \sqcap (\exists p_1. \top)$  is satisfiable w.r.t.  $O$ ; thus, by Definition 1,  $(C, p_1)$  is a valid pair in  $O$ , but this contradicts the hypothesis.

The algorithm can be sketched as follows:

---

ALGORITHM 1: Computation of Valid Pairs (class, property)

---

```

1 Set computeValidPairs(Ontology ont){
2   Set validPairs =  $\emptyset$ ;
3   Set classes = { $C$ :  $C$  is a named class in ont};
4   Set props = { $p$ :  $p$  is a named property in ont};
5   Set pairsToCheck = {( $C, p$ ):  $C \in \text{classes} \wedge p \in \text{props}$ };
6   foreach( $p$  in props)
7      $p.doms = \text{retrieveNamedDomains}(\text{ont}, p)$ ;
8   foreach( $C$  in classes){
9     Set disjC =  $\text{retrieveNamedDisjointClasses}(\text{ont}, C)$ ;
10    foreach( $p$  in props)
11      //On the basis of Property 1...
12      if( $\text{disjC} \cap p.doms \neq \emptyset$ )
13         $\text{pairsToCheck} = \text{pairsToCheck} - \{(C, p)\}$ ;
14    }
15    //On the basis of Property 2 and assuming that each property in ont is satisfiable...
16    foreach( $p$  in props)
17      foreach( $C$  in  $p.doms$ ){
18         $\text{pairsToCheck} = \text{pairsToCheck} - \{(C, p)\}$ ;
19         $\text{validPairs} = \text{validPairs} \cup \{(C, p)\}$ ;
20      }
21    while( $\text{pairsToCheck} \neq \emptyset$ ){
22      select ( $C, p$ ) in pairsToCheck;
23      if( $(C \sqcap \exists p. \top)$  is satisfiable w.r.t. ont){
24        //On the basis of Properties 3 and 4...
25        Set  $\text{newValidPairs}_{(C,p)} = \{(D, q): (D, q) \in \text{pairsToCheck} \wedge$ 
           ( $D \equiv C \vee$ 
            $D \text{ is a named class, which is asserted as a direct or}$ 
            $\text{indirect superclass of } C \text{ in ont})$ 
            $\wedge (q \equiv p \vee$ 
            $q \text{ is a named property, which is asserted as a}$ 
            $\text{direct or indirect superproperty of } p \text{ in ont})\}$ ;
26         $\text{pairsToCheck} = \text{pairsToCheck} - \text{newValidPairs}$ ;
27         $\text{validPairs} = \text{validPairs} \cup \text{newValidPairs}$ ;

```

```

28     } else {
29         //On the basis of Properties 5 and 6...
30         Set  $newInvalidPairs_{(C,p)} = \{(D,q) : (D,q) \in pairsToCheck \wedge$ 
             $(D \equiv C \vee$ 
             $D \text{ is a named class, which is asserted as a direct or}$ 
             $indirect subclass of C in ont) \wedge$ 
             $(q \equiv p \vee$ 
             $q \text{ is a named property, which is asserted as a}$ 
             $direct or indirect subproperty of p in ont)\}$ ;
31          $pairsToCheck = pairsToCheck - newInvalidPairs;$ 
32     }
33 }
34 return  $validPairs;$ 
35 }

```

After some variable initializations (rows 1-5), in which, in particular, the set of all possible class-property combinations is computed (row 5), the specified mechanism works in two phases. The first phase (rows 6-20), reduces the set of class-property pairs to check essentially by browsing the ontology and without invoking any complete Description Logic reasoner. The second phase (rows 21-33), checks the validity of some pairs of the form  $(C, p)$ , by verifying the satisfiability of the corresponding concepts  $C \sqcap \exists p. \top$ , on the basis of Definition 1 (row 23). Then, it exploits each result of such a check to derive either the validity or the invalidity of other pairs, by browsing the ontology and without invoking any complete Description Logic Reasoner (rows 24-32).

Let us analyze the two phases in detail. The first phase consists of two steps. In the first step (rows 6-14), a set of pairs are recognized as invalid. In particular, for each property  $p$ , the algorithm browses the ontology (through the invocation of the function *retrieveNamedDomains(...)*, reported and explained below) for retrieving all the named classes that are either specified as domains of  $p$  or as superclasses of domains of  $p$  (rows 6-7). Then, for each class  $C$ , it computes the set of named classes that can be recognized as disjoint from  $C$  by only browsing the ontology (rows 8-9, where the invocation of the function *retrieveNamedDisjointClasses(...)* -- reported and explained below -- performs the actual browsing of the ontology). If there is at least one class that is both disjoint with  $C$  and either a domain of a property  $p$  or a superclass of a domain of  $p$  (row 12), then, by Property 1, the pair  $(C, p)$  is invalid, thus the algorithm removes it from the pairs to check (row 13). In the second step of the first phase (rows 15-20), a set of pairs are recognized as valid. The algorithm assumes that each property  $p$  in the ontology is satisfiable (i.e. that there exists a model of the ontology in which two entities are related by the property  $p$ ). Therefore, by Property 2, the algorithm inserts each pair  $(C, p)$ , where  $C$  is either a domain of  $p$  or a superclass of it, into the set of valid pairs, without the need of explicitly check its validity (rows 18 and 19).

In the second phase, the algorithm selects a pair  $(C, p)$  among those that should be checked for validity (row 22). Then, it invokes a complete Description Logic reasoner in order to verify whether the corresponding concept  $(C \sqcap \exists p. \top)$  is satisfiable (row 23). If it is, by Definition 1, the selected pair is valid. Therefore, by Properties 3 and 4, the algorithm, besides the validity of  $(C, p)$  and without any Description Logic complete reasoner invocation, it asserts also the validity of any pair  $(D, q)$ , such that in the ontology  $D$  is asserted as a direct or indirect superclass of  $C$  or  $q$  is asserted as a direct or indirect superproperty of  $p$  (rows 25-27). On the opposite, if the checked concept is unsatisfiable, by Definition 1, the selected pair is invalid. Therefore, by Properties 5 and 6, the algorithm, besides the invalidity of  $(C, p)$  and without any Description Logic complete reasoner invocation, it asserts also the invalidity of any pair  $(D, q)$ , such that in the ontology  $D$  is asserted as a direct or indirect subclass of  $C$  or  $q$  is asserted as a direct or indirect subproperty of  $p$  (rows 30-31).

The choice of the pair  $(C, p)$  in row 22 deserves a few words. It should be clear that the presented mechanism aims at reducing the invocations of any Description Logic complete reasoner in order to check the validity of a set of class-property pairs. To this aim, in the second phase of the algorithm, the result of the satisfiability check relevant to the selected pair is exploited to derive the (un)satisfiability of other pairs. Therefore, a good

criterion for selecting the pair  $(C, p)$  in row 22 could be the one which selects the pair that maximizes the number of solved pairs with one single satisfiability check, i.e.:

$$(C, p) = \underset{\{x \in \text{pairsToCheck}\}}{\text{argmax}} (P(x \text{ is valid}) * |\text{newValidPairs}_x| + (1 - P(x \text{ is valid})) * |\text{newInvalidPairs}_x|),$$

where the sets  $\text{pairsToCheck}$ ,  $\text{newValidPairs}_x$  and  $\text{newInvalidPairs}_x$  are specified in the algorithm above. The problem here is estimating the probability that a pair is valid. In the current implementation of the algorithm, we uniformly estimated  $P(x \text{ is valid}) = \frac{6}{7}$ .

The following algorithm retrieves the named class in the ontology that are specified as domains of a property  $p$  or as superclasses of such classes, by only browsing the ontology and without invoking any complete Description Logic reasoner:

---

#### ALGORITHM 2: Retrieval of Named Domains

---

```

1 Set retrieveNamedDomains(Ontology ont, NamedProperty p){
2   Set  $\text{domsP} = \{C: C \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge C \text{ is asserted as a domain of } p \text{ in ont}\};$ 
3   Set  $\text{domsP}_2 = \{C_2: C_2 \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge$ 
       $(\exists C)(C \in \text{domsP} \wedge C_2 \text{ is asserted as a direct or indirect superclass of } C \text{ in ont})\};$ 
4   Set  $\text{superPropsP} = \{q: q \text{ is a named property in ont} \wedge$ 
       $q \text{ is asserted as a direct or indirect superproperty of } p \text{ in ont}\};$ 
5   Set  $\text{domsQ} = \{C_3: C_3 \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge$ 
       $(\exists q)(q \in \text{superPropsP} \wedge C_3 \text{ is asserted as a domain of } q \text{ in ont})\};$ 
6   Set  $\text{domsQ}_2 = \{C_4: C_4 \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge$ 
       $(\exists C_3)(C_3 \in \text{domsQ} \wedge C_4 \text{ is asserted as a direct or indirect superclass of } C_3 \text{ in ont})\};$ 
7   Set  $\text{invPropsP} = \{r: r \text{ is a named property in ont} \wedge$ 
       $r \text{ is asserted as an inverse property of } p \text{ in ont}\};$ 
8   Set  $\text{rangesR} = \{C_5: C_5 \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge$ 
       $(\exists r)(r \in \text{invPropsP} \wedge C_5 \text{ is asserted as a range of } r \text{ in ont})\};$ 
9   Set  $\text{rangesR}_2 = \{C_6: C_6 \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge$ 
       $(\exists C_5)(C_5 \in \text{rangesR} \wedge C_6 \text{ is asserted as a direct or indirect superclass of } C_5 \text{ in ont})\};$ 
10  Set  $\text{superPropsInvPropsP} = \{s: s \text{ is a named property in ont} \wedge$ 
       $(\exists r)(r \in \text{invPropsP} \wedge$ 
       $s \text{ is asserted as a direct or indirect superproperty of } r \text{ in ont})\};$ 
11  Set  $\text{rangesS} = \{C_7: C_7 \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge$ 
       $(\exists s)(s \in \text{superPropsInvPropsP} \wedge C_7 \text{ is asserted as a range of } s \text{ in ont})\};$ 
12  Set  $\text{rangesS}_2 = \{C_8: C_8 \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge$ 
       $(\exists C_7)(C_7 \in \text{rangesS} \wedge C_8 \text{ is asserted as a direct or indirect superclass of } C_7 \text{ in ont})\};$ 
13   $\text{domsP} = \text{domsP} \cup \text{domsP}_2 \cup \text{domsQ} \cup \text{domsQ}_2 \cup \text{rangesR} \cup \text{rangesR}_2 \cup \text{rangesS} \cup \text{rangesS}_2;$ 
14  return  $\text{domsP}$ ;
15 }
```

The returned set of named classes contains all those classes that are explicitly specified as domains of the property  $p$  (row 2), as well as the direct and indirect superclasses of such classes (row 3). Moreover, the domains of a superproperty of  $p$  (rows 4-5), as well as the superclasses of such domains (row 6), are (superclasses of) domains of  $p$ , thus they must be included, too. Since the ranges of the inverse properties of  $p$  (rows 7-8), as well as the superclasses of some ranges (row 9), are (superclasses of) domains of  $p$ , the algorithm collects them, too. Similarly, the ranges of the superproperties of the inverse properties of  $p$  (rows 10-11), as well as the superclasses of such ranges (row 12) must be collected, too. It is worth noting that the algorithm performs a sort of incomplete reasoning, browsing the class and the property hierarchies and searching for explicitly asserted domains and ranges.

The following algorithm retrieves the named classes that are specified as disjoint with a class  $C$ :

---

**ALGORITHM 3: Retrieval of Named Disjoint Classes**

---

```
1 Set retrieveNamedDisjointClasses(Ontology ont, NamedClass C) {
2   Set  $disjC = \{D: D \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge D \text{ is asserted as disjoint with } C \text{ in ont}\}$ ;
3   Set  $disjC_2 = \{D_2: D_2 \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge$ 
       $(\exists D)(D \in disjC \wedge D_2 \text{ is asserted as a direct or undirect subclass of } D \text{ in ont})\}$ ;
4   Set  $disjC_3 = \{D_3: D_3 \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge$ 
       $(\exists C_2)(C_2 \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge$ 
       $C_2 \text{ is asserted as a direct or undirect superclass of } C \text{ in ont} \wedge$ 
       $C_2 \text{ is asserted as disjoint with } D_3 \text{ in ont})\}$ ;
5   Set  $disjC_4 = \{D_4: D_4 \text{ is a named class in ont} \wedge$ 
       $(\exists D_3)(D_3 \in disjC_3 \wedge D_4 \text{ is asserted as a direct or undirect subclass of } D_3 \text{ in ont})\}$ ;
6    $disjC = disjC \cup disjC_2 \cup disjC_3 \cup disjC_4$ ;
7   return  $disjC$ ;
8 }
```

The returned set of named classes contains all those classes that are explicitly asserted as disjoint with  $C$  (row 2). If a class is disjoint with  $C$ , so are its subclasses (row 3). Moreover, if a class is asserted as disjoint with a superclass of  $C$ , it is also disjoint from  $C$  (row 4) and so are its subclasses (row 6). Also in this case, the algorithm performs a sort of incomplete reasoning, browsing the class hierarchy and searching for explicitly asserted disjoint classes.

Algorithm 1 eventually returns the set of valid class-property pairs, given the input ontology. For each class  $C$  in the ontology, the set  $\{(C, p_1), \dots, (C, p_n)\}$  of valid pairs actually expresses a constraint on the RDF triples in the Semantic KB. Such a constraint states that any instance  $x$  of  $C$  can only be subject of triples of the form  $\langle x, p, o \rangle$ , where  $p \in \{p_1, \dots, p_n\}$  (besides triples of the form  $\langle x, q, o \rangle$ , where  $q$  is a pre-defined property in RDF, RDFS, or OWL such as *rdf:type*, *rdfs:label*, etc.). The mentioned constraint can be represented by the SHACL (SHACL, 2017)<sup>5</sup> following *shape*:<sup>6</sup>

```
c-shape
  a sh:NodeShape ;
  sh:targetClass C ;
  sh:closed true ;
  sh:ignoredProperties (rdf:type, rdfs:label, ...) ;
  sh:property [
    sh:path p1 ;
  ] ;
  ...
  sh:property [
    sh:path pn ;
  ] .
```

As stated in Section 3, the current version of the HERO ontology contains 424 classes and 352 properties, which generate a space of 149,248 class-property combinations, in which valid pairs have to be singled out. The algorithm above allowed us to compute the set of valid pairs by only 12,434 invocations of a complete Description Logic reasoner. Thus, the presented algorithm saved nearly 92% of the reasoner invocations, w.r.t. a brute-force approach performing a reasoner invocation for each class-property combination. By exploiting the Konclude complete OWL 2 reasoner (Steigmiller et al., 2014) -- which turned out to be the best-performing reasoner in the Owl Reasoner Evaluation 2015 Competition (Parsia et al., 2017) -- the whole computation took 3,811 seconds (i.e., a little more than one hour) on a Windows 7 Enterprise, SP 1, 16 GB

---

<sup>5</sup> SHACL is a W3C Recommendation defining a language for validating RDF graphs against a set of constraints, typically provided as constructs called *shapes*.

<sup>6</sup> *sh* is the prefix for the namespace <http://www.w3.org/ns/shacl#>.

RAM PC. We also ran a brute-force algorithm on the same PC, with a four hours timeout. Such an algorithm timed-out after 39,600 reasoner invocations, i.e., it checked only 26,5% of the class-property combinations before reaching the timeout.

## 5.2 User Study

The user interface based on the output of the algorithm described in Section 5.1 currently provides users with a flat sequence of properties (see Figure 5), and it could be significantly improved by taking into account the relevance of the different properties that can be used to characterize an event of a given type. To this end, we designed a user study aimed at eliciting users opinion about the relevance of each property that can be used to characterize a specific type of event.

Running the algorithm described in Section 5.1, we noticed that the large majority of classes in HERO-900 referring to domain-dependent event typologies can be characterized by (almost) the same set of properties. Moreover, by analyzing the results of the ontological analysis (Goy et al., 2019a) that led to the class taxonomy of HERO-900, we identified the following major semantically homogeneous groups of classes:

- **Group 1:** Classes referring to physical confrontations (32 classes).
- **Group 2:** Classes referring to protest actions (30 classes).
- **Group 3:** Classes referring to life events (27 classes).
- **Group 4:** Classes referring to labour-related events (18 classes).
- **Group 5:** Classes referring to communicative acts (17 classes).
- **Group 6:** Classes referring to (natural) phenomena (1 class).

We decided to focus on groups 1-3, as they emerged to be the most meaningful with respect to the domain, on the basis of both the number of classes they include, and the results of the domain analysis performed by historians on the archival documents; see (Goy et al., 2019a). Such an analysis also enabled us to select the 7 most representative classes for each group, on the basis of the occurrence of events of these types in the documents:<sup>7</sup>

- **Group 1:** *PhysicalConfrontation, Beating, StreetClash, PoliceCharge, Firing, KillingOfPeople, Wounding.*
- **Group 2:** *ProtestAction, Demonstration, Strike, Picketing, ProtestMarch, PlaceOccupation, SitIn.*
- **Group 3:** *PersonBirth, PersonDeath, Marriage, RoleAssumption, Hiring, Dismissal, Retiring.*

Instances of all classes in these groups can be characterized by means of the following list of properties: *hasActionTopic, hasAdvantaged, hasAgent, hasBeginningEvent/isBeginningEventOf, hasCausalFactor/isCausalFactorOf, hasDamaged, hasEndingEvent/isEndingEventOf, hasExperiencer, hasFinalLocation, hasFinalTime, hasForce, hasInitialLocation, hasInitialTime, hasInstrument, hasIntermediateLocation, hasLocation, hasOpponent, hasParticipant, hasPatient, hasProspectiveParticipant, hasPurpose, hasResult, hasRetaliation/isRetaliationFor, hasSubEvent/isSubEventOf, hasSupporter, hasTheme, hasTimespan, heroInRelationWith, Influences/isInfluencedBy.*

Moreover, in Group 3 there are two classes which admit two additional, more specific, properties, namely: *hasSpouse* (only for *Marriage*), *hasAssumedRole* (only for *RoleAssumption*).

We recruited 30 participants, selected among potential users of the PRiSMHA platform, and assigned 10 of them to each group. For each group: (i) 50% of users were males and 50% were females; (ii) The average age was 39; (iii) 40% of users were expert in History or Human Studies, while 60% of participants had a different background (computer scientists, administrative staff, science students), but all of them were interested in historical and cultural topics.

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<sup>7</sup> The selection of 7 classes for each group under study aimed at reducing the work overload imposed to the participants of the user study.

We designed three online questionnaires in which, after some profile information, users had to rate, on a 1 (definitely irrelevant) to 5 (extremely important) scale, the relevance of each property for describing events belonging to each event typology (class). For example, in Group 1, for the property *hasAgent*, the users had to answer the following question (the original questionnaire was in Italian: We here provide the English translation for the sake of the reader):

*The **agent** is the participant who voluntarily performs the action. Please, notice that an agent can be a person, a group of persons, but also an organization (e.g., a State, a political party, a university, a company, etc.). For instance, "Fiat Chrysler dismissed 10 workers": Fiat Chrysler is the agent.*

*On a 1-to-5 scale (1=definitely irrelevant, 5=extremely important) evaluate the importance of being able to specify the agents in events of the following types:*

<i>Physical confrontation</i>	1 2 3 4 5
<i>Beating</i>	1 2 3 4 5
<i>Street clash</i>	1 2 3 4 5
<i>Police charge</i>	1 2 3 4 5
<i>Firing</i>	1 2 3 4 5
<i>Killing of people</i>	1 2 3 4 5
<i>Wounding</i>	1 2 3 4 5

Moreover, for each property, users could add a free comment. The questionnaires ended with a space for a global free comment.

Before starting, users were invited to have a look at some examples of archival documents (see, for instance, Figure 2) and to read a short, non-technical explanation of the intended meaning of each involved class (e.g., **Firing**: *It represents those confrontation actions where people, collectives, or organizations -- e.g., Police, States, etc. -- fire at people or objects, or where people, collectives, or organizations fire at each other. It is possible to fire using different instruments: shotguns, tanks, rockets, bombs, etc.*).

### 5.3 Results and Discussion

Table 1a and Table 2a (Appendix A.1) report, respectively, the mean and the standard deviation values for Group 1. Interesting hints come from free comments provided by users. In particular, in some cases, the disagreement (but also a low relevance score) seems to arise from a difficulty in catching the intended meaning of the property (in particular, with respect to the given event typologies), or from giving it different interpretations; for example:

- *hasExperiencer*: some users wrote that the meaning of this property is unclear, although the relevance score for it is quite high (mean between 3 and 4).
- *hasTheme*: many users wrote that the meaning of this property is unclear; moreover, this property is the only one that obtained a very low relevance score (lower than 3).
- *hasProspectiveParticipant*: it seems that users provide different interpretations for this property (e.g., people who have the intention to participate, people who are involved against their will, people called for a meeting, etc.); besides disagreement between participants, this property also obtained heterogeneous relevance scores for the different event typologies.
- *hasForce*: some users wrote that this property can be confused with *hasCausalFactor/isCausalFactorOf*; also this property, besides disagreement between participants, obtained heterogeneous relevance scores for the different event typologies.

These comments suggest us to review the actual definition of these properties in HERO, a task we scheduled for next version of our prototype (see Section 6).

An interesting correlation we can observe is the following: for properties that obtained a high relevance score, users tend to agree, while for properties that obtained a lower relevance score, users tend to disagree. This could mean that the relevance of some properties is out of discussion, while the importance of other properties

varies for different users: for somebody some properties are relevant, while for others they are not so important. This implies that no property can be excluded tout-court (and this is reasonable), and the user interface should enable users to access any property, if they think it is relevant (see Section 5.4).

We can also notice that properties that can be considered as semantically “related” (analogous, symmetrical) do not always obtain the same scores; this is the case for the following properties:

- *hasTimespan* and *hasInitialTime* (mean relevance greater than 4 for all classes; moderate agreement), *hasFinalTime* (mean relevance greater than 4 for all classes; different scores for the st. dev., depending on the class).
- *hasLocation* (mean relevance greater than 4 for all classes, fundamental agreement), *hasFinalLocation* and *hasInitialLocation* (mean relevance greater than 4 for some classes, but between 3 and 4 for other classes; moderate disagreement), *hasIntermediateLocation* (mean relevance between 3 and 4 for some classes, but lower than 3 for other classes; substantial disagreement).
- *hasDamaged* (mean relevance greater than 4 for all classes; moderate agreement) and *hasAdvantaged* (mean relevance between 3 and 4 for all classes; moderate agreement).
- *hasOpponent* (mean relevance greater than 4 for some classes, but between 3 and 4 for other classes; moderate agreement) and *hasSupporter* (mean relevance between 3 and 4 for all classes; moderate agreement).
- *hasBeginningEvent/isBeginningEventOf* (mean relevance greater than 4 for some classes, but between 3 and 4 for other classes; substantial disagreement) and *hasEndingEvent/isEndingEventOf* (mean relevance between 3 and 4 for all classes; substantial disagreement).

Table 3a and Table 4a (Appendix A.1) report, respectively, the mean and the standard deviation values for Group 2. The same correlations noticed for Group 1 can be seen also for Group 2 (for properties that obtained a high relevance score, users tend to agree, while for properties that obtained a lower relevance score, users tend to disagree): this fact strengthens the recommendation for the user interface mentioned above, i.e., the user interface should enable users to access any property, if they think it is relevant.

The major differences with respect to Group 1 are the following:

- *hasActionTopic* obtains a **much better** result.
- *hasExperiencer* and *hasTheme* obtain a **better** result.
- The following properties obtain a **slightly better** result: *hasDamaged*, *hasPurpose*, *hasSupporter*, *hasProspectiveParticipant*.
- The following properties obtain a **slightly worse** result: *hasForce*, *hasRetaliation/isRetaliationFor*.
- *hasInstrument* and *hasSubEvent/isSubEventOf* obtain the **same result** in terms of relevance, but with **more agreement**; *Influences/isInfluencedBy* obtains the **same result** in terms of relevance, but with **less agreement**.

User comments can justify some better results:

- *hasProspectiveParticipant*: some users wrote that this property is important for evaluating the success of protest actions (like demonstrations, strikes, protest marches, etc.).
- *hasDamaged*: some users wrote that, in this kind of actions, they found this property sometimes similar to the *hasPatient*.

Moreover, given the semantic context of protest actions, the slightly better result obtained by *hasPurpose* and *hasSupporter* (typical properties of protest actions) is not surprising. The same semantic context clearly explains why *hasActionTopic* obtained a much better result; protest actions, in fact, are typically characterized by their “topic”, given that, in HERO this property has the following intended meaning (explained to the user study participants):



***hasActionTopic***: It associates an action to its “topic”; in fact, some types of action are typically “about a topic”, like, for instance: conferences, speeches, meetings, debates, etc. (a conference about climate changes, a debate about Che Guevara, and so on).

The slightly better result in Group 1 obtained by *hasForce*, *hasRetaliation/isRetaliationFor* could be explained by the fact that these properties seems to be quite important in the characterization of physical confrontational actions. The better results obtained in Group 2 by *hasExperiencer* and *hasTheme* are more difficult to explain, but the concepts of *experiencer* and *theme* were probably more difficult to grasp, and this could explain at least the fact that users have different opinions about them

Table 5a and Table 6a (Appendix A.1) report, respectively, the mean and the standard deviation values for Group 3. These results clearly show that Group 3 deserves a different analysis, since they are quite different with respect to Group 1 and 2. The major difference is the very high disagreement among users: there are a lot of properties with a quite low relevance score and a substantial disagreement, while no property (but the two class-specific ones) obtained a high relevance score with a fundamental agreement. Moreover, a lot of properties obtained very different relevance scores (ranging from 2 up to 4,6) for the different classes involved. Finally, many properties obtained a different relevance score with respect to those obtained in Group 1 and Group 2. User comments can shed some light:

- Some users noted that the context in which this kind of events occur can greatly affect the relevance evaluation (for instance, a user wrote s/he does not think that a person can be considered agent of her/his birth, but s/he gave 5 to *hasAgent* because in the birth of an organization the founders are agents; also in a person death usually the dead person is not an agent, but in a suicide this can be the case).
- Some comments report difficulties in understanding the meaning of some properties in relation with this kind of events (for instance, in a person birth, is the new-born a participant? When a company hires somebody, which is the role played by the hired person? Is s/he a patient, a beneficiary, or both?).
- In the final general comment, several users wrote that it is difficult to link the proposed properties to this kind of events.

These comments highlighting the context-dependency of the relevance evaluation and the difficulties in interpreting the meaning of (some) properties in relation with life events, could -- at least partially -- explain the high disagreement.

Intuitively physical confrontations (and, in particular, street clashes, police charges, killings, woundings, etc.) and protest actions (like strikes or protest marches) seem to have a different “semantic nature” with respect to life events (like births and deaths, or marriages) which are often related to formal acts (e.g., marriage, hiring and dismissal, role assumption, etc.) and seem to have a very complex semantic characterization. This could be the reason why some of the properties with a high score for events in Groups 1 and 2 clearly sound less important or even a little odd for events in Group 3: for example, properties like *hasAgent* or *hasPatient*, but also *hasAdvantaged/Damaged*, or *hasPurpose*, seem to have a marginal role in person birth or death, or in a marriage. These considerations suggest us that further deeper ontological analysis of life events should be addressed in our future work (see Section 6).

Before describing the strategy we propose for assigning each property a correct score on the basis of the involved event typology, some extra heuristics are worth to be mentioned, which will contribute to produce the final properties ranking to be used for generating the user interface (see Section 5.4).

In order to preserve the semantic homogeneity, we decided to keep together “related” properties such as all properties referring to time, or location, as well as property “pairs” like *hasAdvantaged/hasDamaged*. Moreover, given that the literature about event modeling (see Section 2 and 3) agrees on considering generic participation, as well as space and time, as fundamental dimensions to model (historical) events, we decided to keep *hasParticipant*, together with all properties referring to time and all properties referring to location, in first position. Finally, we decided to create an ad hoc last position (independently from the results of the

user study) for the generic property *inRelationWith*, since it represents a sort of “backup”: if the user wants to state that there is a relation between the event s/he is describing and an entity or another event, but s/he is not able to say which kind of relation (even not the relation of “participation in the event”), s/he can choose *inRelationWith*.

The final result is the matrix shown in Table 7a (Appendix A.2), where the relevance scores (*rs*) obtained for  $\langle \text{property}, \text{event-class} \rangle$  pairs have been arranged into four categories:

- (A) *Essential* properties ( $rs \geq 4$ ).
- (B) *Important* properties ( $3 \leq rs < 4$ ).
- (C) *Useful* properties ( $2 < rs \leq 3$ ).
- (D) Other properties ( $rs < 2$ ).

In the following section we will describe how these categories are used to generate the user interface.

## 5.4 The Resulting User Interface

We used the matrix shown in Table 7a (Appendix A.2) to design a new user interface, taking into account the different categories expressing property relevance. The wireframe of such user interface is shown in Figure 8.

The default user interface proposes the user a “guided path” through properties, based on the four relevance categories. However, the user can always access a “flat” form listing all available properties, without taking relevance categories into account (*all properties* link in the wireframe). The flat form is basically the one shown in Figure 5 (see Section 4): properties are displayed in alphabetical order, but two simple heuristics are applied here too: “related” properties (e.g., *hasTimespan*, *hasInitialTime*, etc.) are listed together and *inRelationWith* is left at the end of the list (see Section 5.3).

The guided path, shown in Figure 8, is organized in tabs: the first (default) tab contains *essential properties*, as far as an event (and, in general, an entity) of the selected type is concerned (a strike in Figure 8). The user is invited (but not forced) to start filling these properties, and in particular is invited to first search for a suitable filler in the Semantic KB (*search the KB* link in the figure). Then, she can switch to the second tab, containing *important properties*, and then to *useful properties* (third tab), to conclude with the remaining properties (tab labeled *other* in the figure). It is important to stress that the user is not forced neither to follow the proposed tab sequence, nor to fill any property: the guided path is simply a suggestion in order to avoid presenting the user a long, clumsy, possibly confusing flat form.

Another strategy supporting this goal is the link enabling the user to access the time-related and the location-related properties: since in HERO there are a number of different properties that can be used to specify time (and the same is true for location), these properties are shown only upon request (*other time/location-related properties* link in the figure).

**Create a new entity**

Entity type  v

Entity label

Properties all properties

essential [x]   important [x]   useful [x]   other [x]

v [search the KB](#)  
more + other time-related properties

v [search the KB](#)  
more + other location-related properties

v [search the KB](#)  
more

v [search the KB](#)  
more

v [search the KB](#)  
more

v [search the KB](#)  
more

**Figure 8: wireframe of the new user interface enabling users to characterize an entity (typically an event) through its properties.**

We can now come back to the initial **research question** to state that, starting from the axioms characterizing events and their properties/relations in HERO, the following combined solution supports the generation of a user interface that enables users to characterize events exploiting the conceptual vocabulary provided by HERO:

- A configuration tool enabling administrators to hide classes and properties “unsuited” for human annotators (Figure 7).
- The output of the algorithm described in Section 5.1, that combines heuristics and reasoning to extract from HERO all and only the properties that are compatible with a given event type.
- The results of a user study enabling us to assign to each pair  $\langle \text{property}, \text{event-class} \rangle$  one of four relevance categories; such assignments, in turn, supported the design of a new user interface (Figure 8) for the ontology-driven semantic characterization of events in the PRiSMHA platform.

As stated in Section 1, the solution to the lack of effective management and access tools for historical archives can only be faced through hybrid strategies, that integrate automatic approaches to content mining with user-generated content. The results presented in this paper represent a contribution in this direction, since they provide a solution for building a user interface that supports users in creating semantic meta-data based on a rich computational ontology.

## 6 Conclusions and Future Work

In this paper, we presented our answer to the challenge represented by the ontology-driven user interface in the PRiSMA project. In particular, such an interface enables users to provide full-fledged formal semantic representations of the events narrated in documents from historical archives. Many aspects have been pointed out that deserve further attention.

As far as the ontology is concerned -- as emerged from the discussion of the user study results -- we will revise the actual definition of some properties in HERO (those that revealed difficulties in catching the intended meaning, i.e., *hasExperiencer*, *hasTheme*, *hasProspectiveParticipant*, and the distinction between *hasForce* and *hasCausalFactor/isCausalFactorOf*), as well as the ontological analysis of life events.

We will complete the matrix providing the categorization of properties into relevance classes (Table 7a - Appendix A.2) with the missing HERO classes. Moreover, relevance scores for  $\langle \text{property}, \text{event-class} \rangle$  pairs

could be learnt on the basis of the users selecting properties to characterize the different event types. In particular, the matrix provided by the user study can be used to solve the *cold start problem* (i.e., categorizing properties into relevance classes when data about system usage are not available yet); as long as the system collects data about user selections, the initial relevance scores in the matrix could be gradually integrated with those calculated on the basis of users selections, that become more and more statistically relevant as far as users interact with the system.

As regards the user interface, we are planning a user evaluation of the proposed user interface (Figure 8). Finally, as mentioned in Section 1, we are working on the integration of Named Entity Recognition and Event Mining techniques to provide users of the PRiSMHA platform with suggestions during the annotation process.

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## A APPENDICES

### A.1 Mean and Standard Deviation Values

**Table 1a: Mean values for Group 1.** Properties are classified according to the relevance scores obtained (exceptions to the proposed classification are marked in red).

MEAN	Physical Confront.	Beating	Street Clash	Police Charge	Firing	Killing People	Wound.
<b>value greater than 4 for all classes</b>							
hasAgent	4,4	4,6	4,4	4,3	4,9	4,7	4,3
hasCausalFactor/ isCausalFactorOf	4,1	4,1	4,2	4,2	4,3	4,3	4,2
hasDamaged	4,2	4,1	4	4,3	4,3	4,3	4,2
hasInitialTime	4,1	4	4,2	4,4	4,3	4,3	4,1
hasLocation	4,3	4,4	4,7	4,6	4,7	4,7	4,6
hasParticipant	4,6	4,4	4,3	4,2	4,4	4,9	4,3
hasPatient	4,3	4,4	4,2	4,6	4,7	4,7	4,4
hasPurpose	4	4,1	4,6	4,2	4,2	4,4	4,2
hasTimespan	4	4,2	4,2	4,3	4,3	4,3	4
hasFinalTime	4	4,2	4,2	4,4	4	4,3	3,9
<b>value greater than 4 for some classes, but between 3 and 4 for other classes</b>							
hasBeginningEvent/ isBeginningEventOf	3,2	3,3	4,1	3,7	4	4,1	3,7
hasFinalLocation	3,8	3,7	4,1	4,1	4,1	3,9	3,7
hasForce	3,1	3,1	3,4	3,7	4	4,2	3,7
hasInitialLocation	3,6	3,4	4,1	4,1	3,8	3,7	3,6
hasInstrument	3,8	4,1	3,4	3,7	4	4,7	4,4
hasOpponent	3,7	4	4,1	4,2	4,1	4,3	3,9
hasResult	3,4	3,6	4,6	3,7	4,6	4,7	4,3
hasRetaliation/ isRetaliationFor	3,8	3,9	4	3,9	4,1	4,1	4
Influences/isInfluencedBy	3,8	3,8	4	3,6	4,3	4,3	3,9
<b>value between 3 and 4 for all classes</b>							
hasActionTopic	3,9	4	4	3,8	3,7	3,8	3,7
hasAdvantaged	3,3	3,3	3,6	3,7	3,7	3,6	3,2
hasEndingEvent/ isEndingEventOf	3,1	3,1	3,4	3,4	3,4	3,6	3,2
hasExperiencer	3,3	3,4	3,1	3,1	3,3	3,7	3,6
hasSubEvent/isSubEventOf	3,9	3,8	3,8	3,7	4	4	4
hasSupporter	3,6	3,6	3,8	3,4	3,7	4	3,4
inRelationWith	3,4	3,4	3,4	3,6	3,6	3,6	3,4

<b>value between 3 and 4 for some classes, but between 2 and 3 for other classes</b>							
hasIntermediateLocation	2,8	2,7	3,3	3,3	2,8	2,8	2,7
hasProspectiveParticipant	2,2	2,3	3,1	3	3,1	3,2	2,7
<b>value between 2 and 3 for all classes</b>							
hasTheme	2,3	2,3	2,6	2,6	2,6	2,6	2,4

**Table 2a: Standard deviation values for Group 1.** Properties are classified according to the scores obtained (exceptions to the proposed classification are marked in red). Given that the maximum st. dev. for each couple <property, class> is 2.1, we can consider a low score -- i.e., a fundamental agreement -- values lower than 1.0, and a high score -- i.e., a substantial disagreement -- values greater than 1.0.

ST. DEV.	Physical Confront.	Beating	Street Clash	Police Charge	Firing	Killing People	Wound.
<b>low score (fundamental agreement) for all classes</b>							
hasAgent	0,7	0,7	0,5	0,7	0,3	0,7	0,7
hasLocation	0,7	0,7	0,5	0,5	0,7	0,7	0,5
hasParticipant	0,5	0,7	0,9	1,0	0,5	0,3	0,7
hasPatient	0,7	0,7	1,0	0,5	0,5	0,7	0,7
<b>score only slightly lower than 1.0 (moderate agreement) for all classes</b>							
hasCausalFactor/ isCausalFactorOf	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,7	0,9	0,8
hasDamaged	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,8
hasInitialTime	0,8	1,1	0,7	0,7	0,9	0,9	0,9
hasOpponent	0,9	1,0	0,9	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9
hasPurpose	0,9	0,8	0,7	0,8	0,8	0,7	0,8
hasSupporter	0,9	0,9	1,0	0,9	1,0	1,0	0,9
hasAdvantaged	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,9	0,9	1,1	1,0
hasTimespan	1,1	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9	1,0
Influences/isInfluencedBy	1,0	1,0	0,7	1,1	0,9	0,9	0,9
<b>different scores depending on the event class (typology)</b>							
hasFinalTime	0,9	0,8	0,8	0,7	1,1	0,9	1,2
hasForce	0,9	0,9	1,1	1,1	1,1	0,7	0,9
hasInstrument	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,0	0,9	0,7	0,7
hasResult	1,4	1,4	0,5	1,4	0,7	0,5	0,9
<b>score only slightly greater than 1.0 (moderate disagreement) for all classes</b>							
hasFinalLocation	1,1	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,0
hasInitialLocation	1,2	1,1	1,3	1,3	1,2	1,2	1,2
hasSubEvent/isSubEventOf	1,2	1,2	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0
hasTheme	1,0	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,2	1,2	1,1
<b>high score (substantial disagreement) for all classes</b>							
hasActionTopic	1,4	1,3	1,3	1,5	1,4	1,5	1,4
hasEndingEvent/ isEndingEventOf	1,3	1,4	1,3	1,4	1,4	1,3	1,3
hasExperiencer	1,3	1,3	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,4	1,4
hasIntermediateLocation	1,5	1,3	1,5	1,5	1,4	1,4	1,3
hasProspectiveParticipant	1,0	1,2	1,3	1,5	1,7	1,6	1,5
hasRetaliation/isRetaliationFor	1,5	1,4	1,4	1,5	1,4	1,4	1,3
inRelationWith	1,2	1,4	1,2	1,2	1,4	1,4	1,4
hasBeginningEvent/ isBeginningEventOf	1,4	1,4	0,9	1,3	1,2	1,2	1,3



**Table 3a: Mean values for Group 2.** Properties are classified according to the relevance scores obtained (exceptions to the proposed classification are marked in red).

MEAN	Protest Action	Demonstration	Strike	Picketing	Protest March	Place Occupation	SitIn
<b>value greater than 4 for all classes</b>							
hasActionTopic	4,6	4,6	4,6	3,9	4,4	4	4,4
hasAgent	4,8	4,6	4,7	4,6	4,3	4,7	4,7
hasCausalFactor/ isCausalFactorOf	4,3	4,2	4,4	4,1	4,4	4,4	4,2
hasDamaged	4,6	4,4	4,3	4,7	4,1	4,4	4,6
hasFinalTime	4	4	4,2	4	4	4,1	4
hasInitialTime	4,1	4	4,3	4	3,9	4,3	4
hasLocation	4,3	4,2	4,4	4,4	4,4	4,7	4,4
hasOpponent	4,1	4,1	4,1	4,1	4,1	4,1	4,2
hasParticipant	4,4	4,1	4,2	4	4,1	4,1	4,2
hasPatient	4,4	4,6	4,6	4,4	4,4	4,3	4,6
hasPurpose	4,7	4,7	4,7	4,6	4,8	4,7	4,8
hasResult	4,6	4,3	4,4	4,1	4,2	4,1	4,6
hasSupporter	4	4	4,1	4	4,3	3,9	4,2
hasTimespan	4	4	4,2	4	4	4,1	4
<b>value greater than 4 for some classes, but between 3 and 4 for other classes</b>							
hasAdvantaged	4,1	3,8	4,2	3,7	3,9	3,4	3,8
hasBeginningEvent/ isBeginningEventOf	3,9	3,6	4,2	3,8	3,8	4,1	3,9
hasEndingEvent/ isEndingEventOf	3,8	4	4	3,8	4	3,8	4,1
hasExperiencer	4,1	3,8	3,6	4,2	3,3	4,1	4,3
hasFinalLocation	3,9	4,2	3,4	3,9	3,8	4,1	3,7
hasInitialLocation	3,9	3,9	3,9	4	3,9	4,3	4,1
hasInstrument	4,2	3,8	3,6	3,4	3,6	3,7	3,9
Influences/isInfluencedBy	4	3,9	4,3	3,8	4,1	4	4,1
<b>value between 3 and 4 for all classes</b>							
hasForce	3,9	3,9	4	3,8	3,9	4	4
hasProspectiveParticipant	3,4	3,8	3,8	3,7	3,3	3,4	3,6
hasRetaliation/ isRetaliationFor	3,9	3,9	4	4	4,1	4	3,9
hasSubEvent/isSubEventOf	3,7	3,6	3,6	3,6	3,4	3,2	3,6
hasTheme	3,3	3,2	3,3	3,3	3,3	3,3	3,4
inRelationWith	3,1	3	3,2	3,2	3	3,3	3,2
<b>value between 3 and 4 for some classes, but between 2 and 3 for other classes</b>							
hasIntermediateLocation	3,3	3,2	3	3,1	3,1	2,8	2,6

**Table 4a: Standard deviation values for Group 2.** Properties are classified according to the relevance scores obtained (exceptions to the proposed classification are marked in red). We can consider a low score - i.e., a fundamental agreement -- values lower than 1.0, and a high score -- i.e., a substantial disagreement - values greater than 1.0.

ST. DEV.	Protest Action	Demonstration	Strike	Picketing	Protest March	Place Occupation	SitIn
<b>low score (fundamental agreement) for all classes</b>							

hasAgent	0,4	0,7	0,5	0,7	0,7	0,5	0,5
hasDamaged	0,7	0,9	0,9	0,5	0,9	0,7	0,7
hasFinalTime	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,7
hasInitialTime	0,8	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,5	0,7
hasInstrument	0,7	0,8	0,7	0,9	0,7	0,7	0,6
hasPatient	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,9	0,7	0,9	0,7
hasPurpose	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,4	0,5	0,4
inRelationWith	0,6	0,5	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,5	0,7
<b>score only slightly lower than 1.0 (moderate agreement) for all classes</b>							
hasActionTopic	0,7	0,7	0,9	0,9	0,7	0,9	0,9
hasAdvantaged	0,9	1,0	0,7	1,0	0,9	1,0	1,1
hasCausalFactor/ isCausalFactorOf	0,9	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,7	0,7	1,0
hasEndingEvent/ isEndingEventOf	1,2	1,0	0,7	0,8	0,9	1,0	0,8
hasLocation	1,0	1,0	1,0	0,7	0,7	0,5	0,7
hasParticipant	0,7	0,8	1,0	0,9	0,6	0,9	0,8
hasSubEvent/isSubEventOf	1,0	0,9	1,1	1,0	0,9	1,1	0,9
hasSupporter	1,0	0,7	0,6	0,9	0,7	0,9	0,7
hasTheme	0,9	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,0	0,9	1,0
hasTimespan	0,9	0,9	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,8	0,7
<b>different scores depending on the event class (typology)</b>							
hasExperiencer	0,9	1,0	1,2	1,0	1,2	1,1	0,7
hasFinalLocation	0,8	0,7	1,2	0,9	1,2	1,1	0,7
hasOpponent	1,3	0,6	0,8	0,8	1,1	0,8	0,7
hasResult	0,7	0,9	1,0	1,1	1,4	1,4	0,7
<b>score only slightly greater than 1.0 (moderate disagreement) for all classes</b>							
hasBeginningEvent/ isBeginningEventOf	1,2	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,1	1,3
hasForce	1,5	1,1	1,0	1,2	1,3	1,0	1,1
hasInitialLocation	1,1	0,9	1,1	1,1	1,1	0,7	0,8
hasIntermediateLocation	1,2	1,2	1,0	1,1	1,3	1,1	1,0
Influences/isInfluencedBy	1,1	1,1	0,9	1,1	0,9	1,1	0,9
<b>high score (substantial disagreement) for all classes</b>							
hasProspectiveParticipant	1,4	1,4	1,2	1,4	1,1	1,3	1,3
hasRetaliation/isRetaliationFor	1,5	1,3	1,3	1,3	1,3	1,2	1,5

**Table 5a: Mean values for Group 3.** Properties are classified according to the relevance scores obtained (exceptions to the proposed classification are marked in red).

MEAN	Person Birth	Person Death	Marriage	RoleAssumption	Hiring	Dismissal	Retiring
<b>value greater than 4 for all classes</b>							
hasCausalFactor/ isCausalFactorOf	4,3	4,6	4	4,6	4	4,7	4,1
hasParticipant	4,1	4,1	4,1	4,3	4,1	4,3	4
hasTimespan	4,2	4,2	4,2	4	4	4	4
hasSpouse			4,7				
hasAssumedRole				4,8			
<b>value greater than 4 for some classes, but between 3 and 4 for other classes</b>							

hasAdvantaged	3,2	3,2	3,1	4,4	4	3,4	2,9
hasAgent	4	3,9	3,7	4,8	4,6	4,9	4,6
hasLocation	3,9	3,8	4,1	4	4,2	3,3	2,8
hasResult	4	4,2	3	4,7	3,7	3,4	3,1
Influences/isInfluencedBy	3,4	3,9	3,2	4,6	4,2	4,6	3,4
<b>value between 3 and 4 for all classes</b>							
hasSubEvent/isSubEventOf	3,1	3,3	3,1	3,8	3,4	4	3,1
inRelationWith	3,8	4	3,2	3,9	3,4	3,9	3,1
<b>value between 3 and 4 for some classes, but between 2 and 3 for other classes</b>							
hasActionTopic	2,7	2,7	2,1	3,7	3,4	3,1	2,4
hasBeginningEvent/ isBeginningEventOf	3,4	3,7	2	3,4	3	3,3	2,6
hasDamaged	2,8	3,8	2,4	3,7	3,1	4,6	3
hasEndingEvent/ isEndingEventOf	3,1	3,6	2,3	3,7	3,2	3,6	3,2
hasExperiencer	3	3,6	2,1	4,3	4	4,2	3,4
hasFinalLocation	3	3,6	2,3	3,8	3,2	3,3	2,9
hasFinalTime	2,4	3,3	2,9	3,9	3,3	3,2	3,2
hasForce	2,9	4,2	2,1	3,3	3	4,1	2,7
hasInitialLocation	3,2	3,3	2,2	3,6	3,6	3,2	2,7
hasInitialTime	3,7	3,7	2,8	3,8	3,7	3,6	3,2
hasInstrument	2,1	3,4	2,1	2,9	3,4	3,7	2,4
hasIntermediateLocation	2,9	3	1,9	3,6	3	2,9	2,8
hasOpponent	2,8	3,3	2,6	4,4	3,9	3,9	2,8
hasPatient	3,2	4	2,6	3,4	3,3	4,4	3,4
hasProspectiveParticipant	2,8	2,9	2,2	4,3	3,6	3,7	2,4
hasPurpose	2,8	3,4	2,4	4,3	3,7	4	3,4
hasRetaliation/isRetaliationFor	2,6	4,1	2,1	3,4	2,7	4,2	2,7
hasSupporter	2,8	3,3	2	4,6	4	4,4	3,2
hasTheme	2,6	2,7	1,7	4,1	4	3,9	3

**Table 6a: Standard deviation values for Group 3.** Properties are classified according to the relevance scores obtained (exceptions to the proposed classification are marked in red). We can consider a low score - i.e., a fundamental agreement -- values lower than 1.0, and a high score -- i.e., a substantial disagreement - values greater than 1.0.

ST. DEV.	Person Birth	Person Death	Marriage	RoleAssumption	Hiring	Dismissal	Retiring
<b>low score (fundamental agreement) for all classes</b>							
hasSpouse			0,5				
hasAssumedRole				0,7			
<b>score only slightly lower than 1.0 (moderate agreement) for all classes</b>							
hasAgent	0,9	1,1	1,2	0,4	0,7	0,3	0,5
hasCausalFactor/isCausalFactorOf	0,7	0,7	0,9	0,7	1,3	0,7	0,8
hasParticipant	0,8	0,9	0,6	1,0	0,9	1,0	0,9
<b>different scores depending on the event class (typology)</b>							
hasOpponent	1,6	1,2	1,3	0,5	1,5	1,5	1,3
hasResult	1,5	1,3	1,1	0,5	1,5	1,7	1,7
hasSupporter	1,2	1,1	0,7	0,7	1,4	1,3	1,6
hasTimespan	1,1	1,1	1,0	0,7	0,9	1,1	0,7
<b>score only slightly greater than 1.0 (moderate disagreement) for all classes</b>							
hasLocation	1,1	1,3	1,2	1,0	0,8	0,9	1,2

hasPatient	1,1	1,0	1,4	1,4	1,6	0,7	1,2
hasProspectiveParticipant	1,4	1,4	1,1	1,0	1,4	1,7	1,2
Influences/isInfluencedBy	1,4	1,4	1,4	0,5	1,0	1,0	1,2
inRelationWith	1,6	1,3	1,5	1,3	1,5	1,3	1,4
<b>high score (substantial disagreement) for all classes</b>							
hasActionTopic	1,7	1,5	1,1	1,3	1,3	1,8	1,6
hasAdvantaged	1,6	1,4	1,2	0,7	1,5	1,6	1,6
hasBeginningEvent/ isBeginningEventOf	1,7	1,7	1,1	1,6	1,7	1,9	1,7
hasDamaged	1,3	1,6	1,2	1,7	1,8	1,3	1,5
hasEndingEvent/isEndingEventOf	1,8	1,6	1,5	1,7	1,8	1,9	1,9
hasExperiencer	1,5	1,7	1,5	1,3	1,7	1,4	1,7
hasFinalLocation	1,7	1,8	1,5	1,2	1,5	1,5	1,5
hasFinalTime	1,8	1,9	1,7	1,3	1,7	1,6	1,6
hasForce	1,7	1,6	0,9	1,1	1,3	1,4	1,1
hasInitialLocation	1,6	1,9	1,5	1,2	1,2	1,5	1,4
hasInitialTime	1,7	1,7	1,6	1,3	1,3	1,7	1,5
hasInstrument	1,5	1,9	1,2	1,9	1,6	1,7	1,4
hasIntermediateLocation	1,6	1,7	1,2	1,1	1,2	1,4	1,3
hasPurpose	1,7	1,7	1,5	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,7
hasRetaliation/isRetaliationFor	1,7	1,1	1,5	1,6	1,8	0,8	1,5
hasSubEvent/isSubEventOf	1,7	1,7	1,4	1,3	1,2	1,2	1,5
hasTheme	1,6	1,7	0,9	1,4	1,3	1,7	1,7

## A.2 Relevance Categories

Table 7a: The matrix providing the relevance category for *<property, event-class>* pairs.

event class → property ↓	Beating	Demonstration	Dismissal	Firing	Hiring	Killing People	Marriage	Pers on Birth	Pers on Death	Physical Confront.	Picketing	Place Occupat.	Police Charge	Protest Action	Protest March	Retiring	Role Assumption	Sit In	Street Clash	Strike	Wound
hasActionTopic	A	A	B	B	B	B	C	C	C	B	B	A	B	A	A	C	B	A	A	A	B
hasAdvantaged	A	A	B	A	A	A	B	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	A	A	A	A	A
hasAgent	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
hasAssumed Role	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	A	/	/	/	/
hasBeginningEvent/isBeginningEventOf	B	B	B	A	B	A	C	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	C	B	B	A	A	B
hasCausalFactor/isCausalFactorOf	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
hasDamaged	A	A	B	A		A	B	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	C	A	A	A	A	A
hasEndingEvent/isEndingEventOf	B	B	B	A	B	A	C	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	C	B	B	A	A	B
hasExperiencer	B	B	A	B	A	B	C	B	B	B	A	A	B	A	B	B	A	A	B	B	B
hasFinalLocation	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

hasFinalTime	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
hasForce	B	B	A	A	B	A	C	B	A	B	B	A	B	B	B	C	B	A	B	A	B
hasInitialLocation	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
hasInitialTime	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
hasInstrument	A	B		A		A				B	B	B	B	A	B			B	B	B	A
hasIntermediateLocation	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
hasLocation	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
hasOpponent	A	A	B	A	B	A	C	C	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	C	A	A	A	A	B
hasParticipant	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
hasPatient	A	A	A	A	B	A	C	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	A	A	A	A
hasProspectiveParticipant	C	B	B	B	B	B	C	C	C	C	B	B	B	B	B	C	A	B	B	B	C
hasPurpose	A	A	A	A	B	A	C	C	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	A
hasResult	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	A	B	A	A	B	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	A
hasRetaliation/isRetaliationFor	B	B	A	A	C	A	C	C	A	B	A	A	B	B	A	C	B	B	A	A	A
hasSpouse	/	/	/	/	/	/	A	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
hasSubEvent/isSubEventOf	B	B	A	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A
hasSupporter	A	A	B	A	B	A	C	C	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	C	A	A	A	A	B
hasTheme	C	B	B	C	A	C	D	C	C	C	B	B	C	B	B	B	A	B	C	B	C
hasTimespan	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Influences/isInfluencedBy	B	B	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	B
inRelationWith	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--